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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/584,382	06/21/2006	Michel Schneider	BR-036 PUS 01	1354
31834 7590 08/03/2010 BRACCO RESEARCH USA INC. 305- COLLEGE ROAD EAST PRINCETON, NJ 08540				
EXAMINER				
SCHLIENTZ, LEAH H				
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**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

# Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/584,382

**Applicant(s)**

SCHNEIDER ET AL.

**Examiner**

Leah Schlientz

**Art Unit**

1618

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 May 2010.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36, 38-47 and 49 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 3, 19, 20, 28, 29, 34-43, 46 and 47 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 4-18, 21-27, 30-33, 44, 45 and 49 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 June 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-940)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/21/06, 9/18/06
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Election/Restrictions***

Applicant's election with traverse of Group I in the reply filed on 5/18/2010 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that contrary to the Examiner's assertion, all of the pending claims do share a special technical feature: all require an assembly comprising a gas-filled microvesicle bearing a first overall net charge and a component associated with said microvesicle wherein said component is a supermolecular structure formed by the association of a plurality of molecules, which bears a second overall net charge opposite in sign to said first net charge, comprises a targeting ligand, a diagnostic agent or any combination thereof, and a biocompatible surface active agent. Applicant asserts that Klaveness (US 2002/0102217) does not teach a component to be associated with a microvesicle comprising a biocompatible surface agent, only teaching polylysine and a fusion peptide, and that the instant claims require that the component is a supermolecular structure formed by association of a plurality of molecules (comprising surface active agent molecules).

This is not found persuasive because lack of unity can still be shown with regard to the amended claims by US 2004/0146462.

An international application should relate to only one invention or, if there is more than one invention, the inclusion of those inventions in one international application is only permitted if all inventions are so linked as to form a single general inventive concept (PCT Rule 13.1). With respect to a group of inventions claimed in an

international application, unity of invention exists only when there is a technical relationship among the claimed inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding special technical features.

The expression "special technical features" is defined in PCT Rule 13.2 as meaning those technical features that define a contribution which each of the inventions, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art. The determination is made on the contents of the claims as interpreted in light of the description and drawings (if any). Whether or not any particular technical feature makes a "contribution" over the prior art, and therefore constitutes a "special technical feature", should be considered with respect to novelty and inventive step.

The common technical feature in all the groups is "an assembly comprising a gas-filled microvesicle bearing a first overall net charge and a component associated with said microvesicle wherein said component is a supermolecular structure formed by the association of a plurality of molecules, which bears a second overall net charge opposite in sign to said first net charge and comprises a targeting ligand, a diagnostic agent or any combination thereof, and a biocompatible surface active agent." This element cannot be a special technical feature under PCT Rule 13.2 because the element is shown in the prior art.

Eriksen (US 2004/0146462) teaches a combined preparation for simultaneous, separate or sequential use as a contrast agent in ultrasound imaging, said preparation comprising: i) a first composition which is an injectable aqueous medium comprising dispersed gas and material serving to stabilise said gas; and ii) a second composition

which is an injectable oil-in-water emulsion wherein the oil phase comprises a diffusible component capable of diffusion in vivo into said dispersed gas so as at least transiently to increase the size thereof, said composition further comprising material serving to stabilise said emulsion, characterised in that material present at the surfaces of the dispersed gas phase and material present at the surfaces of the dispersed oil phase have opposite charges and thereby have affinity for each other (claim 1). The emulsion component is considered to be within the scope of the instantly claimed "supermolecular structure formed by the association of a plurality of molecules," and peptide containing emulsions including surfactants are disclosed in the examples (Table 1, e.g. preparation 24).

As a result, no special technical features exist among the different groups because the invention in Group 1 fails to make a contribution over the prior art with respect to novelty or inventive step. In conclusion, there is lack of unity of inventions, and therefore restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

The election of the following species is also acknowledged: i) lipid bearing positive charge, in particular DSTAP; ii) and iii) propylene glycol modified phospholipid; iv) peptide; iv) phospholipid.

### ***Status of Claims***

Claims 1-36, 38-47 and 49 are pending, of which claims 34-36, 38-43, 46 and 47 are withdrawn from consideration at this time as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Claims 3, 19, 20, 28 and 29 are withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to non-elected species. Claims 1, 2, 4-18, 21-27, 30-33, 44, 45 and 49 are readable upon the elected invention and species and are examined herein on the merits for patentability.

### ***Double Patenting***

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to

be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1, 2, 4-18, 21-27, 30-33, 44, 45 and 49 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the claims of copending Application No. 10/584,327. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because both sets of claims are drawn to an assembly comprising a gas-filled microvesicle bearing a first overall net charge and a component associated with said microvesicle wherein said component is a supermolecular structure formed by association of a plurality of molecules, which bears a second overall net charge opposite in sign to said first net charge and comprises a biocompatible surface active agent. Both sets of claims include limitations that the component includes a targeting ligand or diagnostic, such as in claim 1 of the instant application and claim 4 of the '327 application. In the instant claims, the component has a diameter of 300 nm or lower (claim 8), and in the '327 application, the component has a diameter of 100 nm or lower. Accordingly, the claims are overlapping in scope and are obvious variants of one another.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1, 2, 4-18, 21, 22, 30-33 and 45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Eriksen *et al.* (US 2004/0146462).

Eriksen teaches a combined preparation for simultaneous, separate or sequential use as a contrast agent in ultrasound imaging, said preparation comprising: i) a first composition which is an injectable aqueous medium comprising dispersed gas and material serving to stabilise said gas; and ii) a second composition which is an injectable oil-in-water emulsion wherein the oil phase comprises a diffusible component capable of diffusion in vivo into said dispersed gas so as at least transiently to increase the size thereof, said composition further comprising material serving to stabilise said emulsion, characterised in that material present at the surfaces of the dispersed gas phase and material present at the surfaces of the dispersed oil phase have opposite charges and thereby have affinity for each other (claim 1). The emulsion component is considered to be within the scope of the instantly claimed "supermolecular structure formed by the association of a plurality of molecules," and peptide containing emulsions including surfactants are disclosed in the examples (Table 1, e.g. preparation 24). See



also Examples 10-27 including negatively charged perfluorobutane gas microbubbles (stabilized by hydrogenated phosphatidylserine) and positively charged emulsions; especially Ex. No 15.

With regard to claim 4, therapeutic agents are disclosed as part of the preparation (claim 20).

With regard to claim 5, distearoylphosphatidylcholine is also included emulsions comprising positively charged surface material and are considered to be "bioactive" in that the component functions as a surfactant in a biological system (paragraph 0154).

With regard to claims 6 and 7, preparation 2 is disclosed, including microbubbles comprising 1,2-distearoyl-3-trimethyl-ammoniumpropane and distearoylphosphatidylcholine, which are considered to be "bioactive" in that the component functions as a surfactant in a biological system.

With regard to claim 8, emulsion particles as small as 0.1 micron are disclosed (paragraph 0046).

With regard to claims 12-15, 0.2  $\mu\text{l}$  gas/kg body weight negatively charged perfluorobutane gas dispersion was combined with 0.1  $\mu\text{l}$  gas/kg body weight positively charged perfluorodimethylcyclobutane emulsion.

With regard to claims 31-33, the Office does not have the facilities for examining and comparing applicant's product with the product of the prior art in order to establish that the product of the prior art does not possess the same functional characteristics of the claimed product. The claims are descriptive of the zeta potential of the assembly, and thus would be an inherent property of the claimed composition. In the absence to

the contrary, the burden is upon the applicant to prove that the claimed products are functionally different than those taught by the prior art and to establish patentable differences. See *Ex parte Phillips*, 28 U.S.P.Q.2d 1302, 1303 (PTO Bd. Pat. App. & Int. 1993), *Ex parte Gray*, 10 USPQ2d 1922, 1923 (PTO Bd. Pat. App. & Int.) and *In re Best*, 562 F.2d 1252, 195 USPQ 430 (CCPA 1977). Since Eriksen teaches compositions meeting the structural requirements of the instant claims, it is interpreted absent evidence to the contrary that such formulations would be capable of achieving claimed functional property (zeta potential).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 1, 2, 4-18, 21-27, 30-33, 44, 45 and 49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schneider *et al.* (US 6, 258,378) in view of Eriksen *et al.* (US 2004/0146462), in further view of Unger (US 2002/0159952).

Schneider teaches drug containing liposomes to selected areas in the organism and subsequently breaking or opening the liposomes to release the encapsulated content at a given site. In this method, the potential energy-containing agent to be used in association with the liposome vesicles and whose energy can be liberated at will to assist releasing the liposome encapsulated content consists of microparticles (microbodies) with confined air or gas. The microparticles are preferably air- or gas-filled microspheres, micro-vesicles, or microcapsules, more preferably air- or gas-filled microbubbles or microballoons. When air or gas-filled microspheres in close vicinity to liposome vesicles are caused to break or explode, the liberated cavitation energy will spread around and assist in opening the liposome membrane to free the encapsulated content or by changing the membrane permeability to enhance the drug diffusion. The triggering pulses of, for instance, radio or sound energy to burst the microspheres or microcapsules filled with the confined gas need not be as energetic as those required for directly acting on the liposomes membrane, hence the impact on nearby tissues is reduced. Liposomes optionally comprise targeting ligands (column 2, lines 15-45). The internal volume of the microbubbles is limited by the gas/liquid interface, or in other words, the microbubbles are only bounded by an envelope involving the molecules of the liquid and surfactants loosely bound at the gas to liquid interface or boundary. In the present invention, the surfactants preferably comprise one or more phospholipids at

least in part in laminar or lamellar form. The term "lamellar form" indicates that the surfactants are in the form of thin films involving one or more molecular layers ("laminar" form). Particularly preferred are the phospholipids selected from neutral phospholipids such as hydrogenated phosphatidyl choline (HSPC), dipalmitoyl-, distearoyl- and diarachidoyl phosphatidylcholine (DPPC, DSPC, DAPC); negatively charged phospholipids such as dipalmitoyl and distearoyl phosphatidic acid (DPPA, DSPA), dipalmitoyl and distearoyl phosphatidylserine (DPPS, DSPS), dipalmitoyl and distearoyl phosphatidylglycerol (DPPG, DSPG); reactive phospholipids such as phosphatidyl ethanolamine derivatives coupled to a polyethyleneglycol, a biotinyl, a glutaryl, a caproyl or a succinyl amine (column 4). The gas-filled microspheres may be more or less closely associated with the liposomes, i.e. they may simply be admixed with the liposome vesicles whereby they will statistically distance from each other. Alternatively, the liposome vesicles and the gas-filled microspheres can be organised to have affinity for each other, for instance they may each be provided with the molecular components of a conjugate pair. As an example, an antigen may be incorporated in the liposome membrane and an antibody in the microspheres, or vice-versa, so that antigen-antibody conjugation will cause the microspheres and the liposome vesicles to couple with each other. Other coupling systems include lipids (column 5-6). Particularly preferred embodiments of the present invention involve liposomes which comprise three components: A. a neutral lipid, for example, a nonionic or zwitterionic lipid or their derivatives; B. a negatively or positively charged lipid, and C. a lipid bearing a functional component, for example N-biotinyl-PE or PEG-PE. Cholesterol or cholesterol

derivatives can be used to replace a part of component A, as generally known to the skilled person (column 6, lines 20+).

Schneider does not specifically recite that microbubbles are associated with liposomes by electrostatic interaction between positively or negatively charged microbubbles with liposomes having opposite charge.

Eriksen teaches combined preparation for simultaneous, separate or sequential use as a contrast agent in ultrasound imaging, said preparation comprising: i) a first composition which is an injectable aqueous medium comprising dispersed gas and material serving to stabilise said gas; and ii) a second composition which is an injectable oil-in-water emulsion wherein the oil phase comprises a diffusible component capable of diffusion in vivo into said dispersed gas so as at least transiently to increase the size thereof, said composition further comprising material serving to stabilise said emulsion, characterised in that material present at the surfaces of the dispersed gas phase and material present at the surfaces of the dispersed oil phase have opposite charges and thereby have affinity for each other (claim 1). The efficacy of contrast agent preparations may be substantially enhanced if the two compositions are formulated in such a way that the dispersed gas component and diffusible component have affinity for each other, for example as a result of attractive electrostatic or other physical forces or of chemical (including biological) binding. This may be achieved by formulating the dispersed gas component as a stabilised gas dispersion and the diffusible component as a stabilised emulsion such that material present at the surfaces of the dispersed gas has affinity for material present at the surfaces of the

dispersed diffusible component. The surface materials having affinity for each other may, for example, be materials such as surfactants which serve to stabilise the gas and diffusible component dispersions. Alternatively, surface materials with appropriate mutual affinity may be mixed with, chemically linked to or otherwise associated with non-affinity stabilising materials in the respective dispersions (paragraph 0015).

Unger teaches that vesicles formed from lipids as stabilizing material include micelles, liposomes, etc., which can be used for carrying therapeutic materials (see paragraphs 0041, 0184, 0202).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to provide microbubbles having predominantly cationic or anionic phospholipids which are associated with liposomes (or micelles) having a phospholipids of the opposite charge when the teachings of Schneider are taken in view of Eriksen and Unger. Schneider teaches that either microbubble and/or liposome can be prepared using predominantly cationic or anionic phospholipids, and teaches that liposome vesicles and the gas-filled microspheres can be organised to have affinity for each other, including via coupling systems such as lipids. While Schneider does not specifically recite that lipids having electrostatic interaction is a method for coupling, one would have been motivated to provide electrostatic interaction between the microbubble and liposome charged components since it is known in the art from Eriksen that a dispersed gas component and another phospholipid stabilized vesicle (emulsion) may have affinity for each other as a result of attractive electrostatic or other physical forces or of chemical (including biological) binding, and that inclusion

of oppositely charged components may provide increased interaction and stability between the components. With regard to claim 23, it would have been further obvious to employ charged micelles as equivalent to liposomes as taught by Scheider, since Unger teaches that micelles and liposomes are functionally equivalent vesicles for incorporation and delivery of therapeutic agents.

### ***Conclusion***

No claims are allowed at this time.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Leah Schlientz whose telephone number is (571)272-9928. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Tuesday and Thursday-Friday 9 AM-5 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Hartley can be reached on 571-272-0616. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Michael G. Hartley/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1618

LHS